

ABSTRACT

A pre-ionizing arrangement for a gas laser includes two ceramic-jacketed ionizer electrodes extending into an enclosure including spaced-apart slab electrodes of the laser and a lasing gas at reduced pressure. RF power is applied to the dielectric-jacketed ionizer electrodes creating a gas discharge between the dielectric-jacketed ionizer electrodes. This discharge provides ions in the laser gas. The presence of these ions in the lasing gas facilitates ignition of a gas discharge between the slab electrodes for energizing the laser.